

## ENGINEERS PLIED PICK AND SHOVEL COMING AND GOING

But Between Times Even  
Privates Bossed Million  
Dollar Jobs

### RAILROADERS A.E.F. VETS

First Yanks to Parade in London  
Even if They Were Weak on  
Squads East About

When the A.E.F. was very young, so young that the populace of French villages clustered around railway stations when American troops passed, and cried: "Vive Liberte! Vive l'Armee!" So young that when a couple of O.D. clads asked a wayside dame for a drink of water, she invariably led them to a farm house, brought forth wine and invited them to dinner, so young that Bordeaux had no M.P.'s and the Rue des Galles wasn't out of bounds—when, in other words, it was still August of 1917, a regiment of Railway Engineers detached at the town of St. Eulalie-Carbon-Blanc, hiked a kilometer up a road, and encamped in a couple of dozen Adrian barracks which had just been hastily thrown up by some P.G.'s under French instruction.

The first thing that happened to these Engineers, after their packs had been deposited on the hut floors, was an announcement that, pending further assignment, they would suffer forth each morning with picks and shovels, and dig ditches for a water system for the camp. Thus their initiation into the A.E.F. was much the same as that of other regiments of all branches of the service which came later. They sweated, inhaled dust and dug.

Justice, Poetic and Pathetic  
A week ago last Tuesday the same regiment under almost the same conditions, except that mud had replaced dust, hiked into the same camp, and into the identical barracks—deposited their packs, took up picks and shovels, and went forth to dig. But the camp is now the embarkation center of Base Section number 2, and the regiment was on its way homeward, whether it started early this week, meanwhile, it picked and it shoveled. The last end of that regiment in France was therefore identical unto the first, a bit of poetic justice which would have made Socrates smile, although it was more or less calculated to make the members of the 18th Engineers (Railway) weep. The departure of the original railway engineering regiments of the A.E.F.—numbered 11 to 19 inclusive—does a chapter of American history in France which will leave its imprint on the map of Europe for more years than the members will be alive, for it was these regiments, arriving in the summer of 1917 and followed by other specialized engineering troops in later months, which handled the many great construction projects extending from base ports to front lines, building a score of American cities, cities of barracks, railways, and shops, which were the ground work for the Army of 2,000,000 which fought and toiled to beat the Hun.

These regiments were recruited from the pick of railway engineering talent in the States, assembled during the first months after our declaration of war, giving the briefest of military training and then overseas to work. They began with picks and shovels, later they constructed, installed and operated railroads, machine shops, projects of every kind, and built the instruments of the ditch, they graduated to the biggest American built moils, the most powerful electric cranes, the heaviest pneumatic hammers, drop hammers, bridge building machines—everything conceivable in constructive machinery.

Bucks on Million-Buck Jobs  
Their ranks included builders and operators of everything that has to be built and operated. And if they came back at the last to the pick and shovel—well, they took it with a grin and laughed their way back into transports, as they laughed their way off. Some of them have been operating or building narrow-gauge lines up under the big shells, and some of them never left the husports, being mostly too busy to get away on leave, some of them have D.S.C.'s and some have D.S.M.'s. Many have no more chevrons than the day they landed, yet have housed hundreds of men and handled jobs that ran into millions of dollars. Others have won commissions and extra bars and gold bars and furl. Lots of them have been detached or transferred, and aren't in the bunch on the homeward journey. Lots of them have worked harder and done more for their dollar-ten a day, than they did in other years for that much pay.

First to Parade in London  
Among the distinctions claimed by the group of engineers is that of having first paraded in London, which one regiment did early in August, 1917, and were complimented by King George, although they experienced some difficulties in keeping their alignment, but they had their own pride in training in squads east and west before embarking. Also the Railway Engineers were the first complete regiments of Americans on the front, one regiment being wiped out in the famous Cambrai affair with the British in October and November, 1917. The quality of engineering abilities in these regiments is attested by the numbers of men commissioned from the ranks, one company roster of 1917 now showing 17 names of warrant officers of the San Borne. Many of them were commissioned in the companies to which they belonged, without passing through training camps, a notable exception to the general rule which keeps the newly made lieutenant away from the outfit in which he may formerly have done K.P. and fatigue duty.

The Railway Engineers are not grievously worried about jobs at home. Most of them have come closer to following their own lines of work than helps the lot of the average soldier, and while they haven't been exactly driving union scale while in France, they have learned much which will help them to command high wages at home.

### PAINT AND GROW RICH

The art renaissance which has developed in the A.E.F., as exemplified by the divisional insignia, is now being carried over to the wearing gold chevrons, has just had a new manifestation around the embarkation camps at St. Nazaire.

Ed. James Moore, of the Casual Paint Shop, is the father and founder of a new school of art which is the outgrowth of painting methods originated in the camouflage service, combined with a style reminiscent of the early delirium tremens period. Private Moore is painting up issue steel helmets in many colors and designs for returning doughboys. The present expectation that A.E.F. soldiers will be allowed to retain the old steel hat they wore at the front is giving Private Moore many commissions. He takes the old helmet—it is especially suitable if it has acquired a bullet hole or shrapnel gash—and paints on it a design conforming to the owner's ideas, usually emblematic of some regiment or battle or troop transport, a submarine usually figuring in the latter design.

## AMERICA'S OLD HOME SECTOR



Seichprey  
America's old home sector

Continued from Page 1

can be heard these days the sound of the hammer, for already the work of reconstruction is afoot even in that desolate town. But the hammers are French hammers and the buildings rising there are little French bungalows, made of wood. The roofs are red-tiled, of course. Workmen sent out by the French Government are putting them up to welcome back the civilians and out of the crumbled pile of rubbish that was once the village church, Monsieur le maire has rescued the church bell. It swings now from a wooden support, ready to ring in the villagers folk when they venture back.

For the villagers are coming back. Every once in a while a wobbly, impromptu, little train, consisting of a locomotive and two coaches, trundles forth from Toul and

lurches along till it reaches the trenches and wire near Elber. Then it expires. Out of it near the old folks of this unhappy country-side. The shake hands with the conductor and engineer, look around them puzzled and wistful, then pick up their bundles and scatter slowly to what is left of their villages.

Even in Amersbach—the blasted farming village which was captured by the 53rd Brigade—the villagers are putting about. One house is actually rising on the other side of the Rupt de Mad. For the old farmer who still resides resolutely in the cellar, four leisurely German prisoners are slowly and neatly rebuilding his home. The only member of the A.E.F. left in the vicinity is a pensive goat bestrodden upon the grateful farmer by a departing Yankee outfit, whose

masoch it had been. They also gave him some canned goods to which they were not particularly devoted, and other retiring American units have improved his larder considerably. The old farmer likes American.

plumage, that once distinctly uncomfortable home of brigades and regiments of the 2nd Division, is still an American town, but that is because on its outskirts the cemetery for the St. Mihiel area is being made, each day witnessing the arrival from the field of truck-loads of coffins into which the hastily buried dead of last September have been gathered.

### Still Life in Vignoulles

Vignoulles, the little town in which the converging American forces met at dawn on General Pershing's birthday, still boasts some road members and from the desolate heights of Hattochattel, you can see American guards supervising the work of our prisoners who are quartered in the old quarry behind the town.

But St. Benoit knows us no more and only a few French folk are left to peer curiously at the ruins of the once sumptuous chateau which, to the great horror of all the property owners and authorities, was occupied by Brig. Gen. Douglas MacArthur as his headquarters when it was in the front line.

Monseigneur knows us no more and the wonderful German dugouts in that once "impenetrable" stronghold now shelter only some lean cats, who prowl over the hill and look down on the waste land in the valleys below.

They see scorched earth, soil that seems incapable of putting forth the green stuff with which spring mantling France everywhere. Also, powdered bones, fragments of skeletons and wire, wire, wire. Once upon a time these valleys were carpeted with those meadows of well-tilled, many-colored crops which make so many French villages so reassuring panoramas of peace and plenty. It will take the work of many hands and the passage of many seasons to bring that look back to the wilderness of Seichprey and St. Mihiel.

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THE U. S. RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION has established a "Homeseekers Bureau" to furnish information about opportunities in the several States to those who wish to be employed in the railroad industry, and to assist them in their search for work. It is a free service, and is open to all who are interested in the railroad industry. It is a free service, and is open to all who are interested in the railroad industry.

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## A.E.F. AMUSEMENTS

The head field coach of the Third Army players is Miss Blanche Wenner, who spends most of her time riding through the Rhine mountain roads reviewing the shows. On her say-so depends largely whether or not a show is good enough for other divisions besides its own. The Y.M.C.A. director of the troupe is C. E. Durgue, formerly of Keokuk, Iowa, who once gained fame transporting an entire troupe in an airplane in order to give a performance on time.

Schuyler Ladd, who played the leading role in "The Yellow Jacket" for more than 1,000 performances last season, was starred as mess sergeant in more than 1,000 meals served at Base Hospital No. 8 in Saverney, has come back to the stage. But it is the A.E.F. stage, for he is one of "The Playlet Players," who have just launched a new production to tour the Army circuit. Sgt. Walter Hall, of the same outfit, is also in the company. Jack Storey, who came over as a member of the Over There Theater League to sing and play the piano, not only fulfills his contract in this respect, but to every one's surprise (including his own), emerges at the end of the evening as one of the most clerical and imposing bishops ever seen on the stage. Louise Hamilton and Marie Turpin play the feminine roles. It's a great show.

The various booking offices of the Army and the Y.M.C.A. are besieged with applications to play the Third Army, for all the entertainers have a great passion to be able to say afterwards that they toured the Rhineland and to send picture post cards to "Variety" and "The Mirror" from Coblenz. According to all reports, the Third Army is, therefore, being entertained as never an army was entertained before since the war began.

One of the lucky units just ordered there is an all-girl unit, the musical trio made up of Edith L. Myers, Lucy P. Bradley and Betty Maddox.

As the A.E.F. dwindles and dwindles, the number of its entertainers grows and grows. The month of April will see more than 100 entertainers in the A.E.F. A recent cable to Y.M.C.A. headquarters indicates that none of the big stars are available at this time for this work. With a few notable exceptions, this has been true ever since the beginning.

"The Keweenaw Frolic," the representative S.O.S. show, is rapidly becoming more or less of an institution in the theatrical firmament of A.E.F. attractions. Lieut. Col. Leon M. Logan and Capt. P. J. Donitz have combined the talents of the American forces to produce the best material available. Eddie Cox, feature of two New York Winter Garden productions, sings his own com-

positions, and John Schubert, the "Human Frog," formerly with Barnum and Bailey's circus, works directly over the heads of his audience. Combs, Ludwig and Mallison, of the "Theatrical Troupe," who had a recent Broadway show, and Rose and Warren are a few of those who help toward the great success of this entertainment, which is nightly achieving throughout the S.O.S.

Being in Mesopotamia with Hindustani beauties all about them is about the last thing that could happen to a luck private of the A.E.F. It happens, however, in "The Hindustani Beauties," only the Hindustani beauties used to chase Germans before they became actors. "This Sixth Corps show is now playing in the Tournai area."

Carroll MacComas, who played the title role in "The Salamander" and the leading part in "Seven Chances," has been starring in and down the Rhine with great success, where she has had the distinction of breaking one engagement to dinner with one major general and of being told by two sergeants and one corporal that she had talent and that they would like to give her a start on a Middle Western chautauqua circuit.

The cast of the "Crimson Coconut" gave a special performance for the Queen of Rumania on April 12 at Aix-les-Bains, and 25 men and a second lieutenant were awarded medals by the Queen.

Nantes and vicinity are being entertained by "The Coffee Coolers," a combination minstrel and vaudeville show staged by the personnel of Base Hospital 19.

### P.O.'S FOR PARIS LEAVE MEN

For the greater convenience of Americans in the hotel and military offices of the post office in Paris, as well as for leave men, three sub-station post offices have just been established by the Postal Express Service. They are at 4 Place de la Concorde, adjoining Hotel Crillon, operating particularly as a Peace Conference branch; at the Elisee Palace Hotel, and at the new Grand Hotel, where mail for Army students in the Sorbonne is received and distributed.

Other offices will be established as need arises. The main office of the American Post Office in Paris, A.P.O. 752, as well as the general offices of the Postal Express Service, are in the Hotel Mediterranee, 98 Quai de la Republique.

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## MAKE THE BEST OF IT

You want to go home. Sure—most everybody in the A.E.F. does, but all can't go home at once.

Some must stay quite a while longer. Then MAKE THE BEST OF IT.

Which means: Make the best use of your spare hours in France.

Many men in the A.E.F. are using spare hours to better prepare for civilian jobs. By General Orders Nos. 9 and 30, G.H.Q. has made possible educational opportunities in the A.E.F. Most important of these are in the post schools. In charge of each is a "post school officer." He's the man for you to see if you're interested in making good use of your spare hours.

### Ask Yourself a Few Questions

What sort of job are you going after when you get home?  
Can you fill a live business job?  
Can you write a letter that will make the man who reads it want you in his employ?  
Do you know shorthand? Business arithmetic? Business English?  
If it's a mechanical job, are you a first-class man at your specialty?  
If it's farming, do you know as much as you wish about stock-raising, farm management, soils, crop rotation, marketing?  
If the post school of your outfit isn't offering the branch you want, see the post school officer of your outfit about having it offered.

Of course, you can't expect too much from a few weeks' or a few months' study in these months of waiting. Facilities are far from ideal—

But you can expect a great deal if you form the purpose to make the best of your spare hours and if you stick to it!

You can make a mighty good start right here in the A.E.F.—while waiting to go home. Approximately 200,000 A.E.F. men are making the best of their spare hours. Most of these are in post schools.

## CROIX DE GUERRE WITH PALM GIVEN COLORS OF 32ND

More Than 200 Doughboys  
and Machine Gunners  
Honored by France

Doughboys of four regiments and members of three machine gun battalions, all of the 32nd Division, on Sunday were accorded one of the highest honors yet paid any division by the Allies. General Munz, commander of the Tenth French Army, with which they had carried out the successful attack on Juvigny last August, pinned the Croix de Guerre with palm on their colors following a ceremony at Dierdorf, near the headquarters of the division, in the Rhine bridgehead.

He also decorated scores of men and officers for acts of individual bravery. In all, 300 crosses have been received by this division, though only about 220 were given out by General Munz.

In addition, Maj. Gen. Joseph T. Dickman, commander of the Third Army, distributed 24 Distinguished Service Crosses, the highest of the honors of the American Army, to the 12th Machine Gun Battalion and the 12th Machine Gun Battalion. The 12th Machine Gun Battalion, the famous "Brigade des Terribles," comprising the 127th and 128th machine gun battalions and the 12th Machine Gun Battalion, and the divisional machine gun battalion, the 19th.

The division has just completed an annual association, an interesting feature of which is that it establishes a financial foundation by a life membership fee of \$2. In this way about \$50,000 has been received, the interest of which is expected to provide sufficient funds to operate the organization.

The first convention will be held next year in Milwaukee.

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